

Africa and the World, Spring 2008
Instructor: Conte
Venue: ESLC 46
Time: TTh 3:00 – 4:15
Conte's Office Location: 323 Old Main
Office Hours: T 2:00 – 3:00
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Introduction

This course surveys African history from its earliest days to the present. It is intended as an overview for students interested in Africa and for history teaching majors who will incorporate African-related themes into their own courses. Given the breadth of subject matter, students will only scratch the surface of African's social, political, environmental and economic histories. However, each student will have the opportunity to develop a research project on some historical topic of their choosing (with my approval, of course). The course requires regular attendance, daily preparation, class participation, regular attention to readings and a number of short writing assignments. If you feel unprepared for this type of rigor, please drop the class.

Course Readings

Akyeampong, Emmanuel Kwaku, ed. *Themes in West Africa's History*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006.

Northrup, David. *The Atlantic Slave Trade*. Second Edition. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 2002.

Thompson, Leonard. *A History of South Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Coetzee, J.M. *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Ngugi wa Thiongo, *Petals of Blood*.

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers and Theses*. Optional

Electronic Reserve for HIST 3510 under USU library course reserves

Selected News Sites

Please consult the new sites regularly. I will ask for daily reports of breaking and ongoing stories at the beginning of each class.

BBC World News <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/default.stm>

AllAfrica.com <http://allafrica.com/>

Afrol News <http://www.afrol.com/>

International Crisis Group <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm>

Evaluation:

Quizzes (4) 200 pts

There will be one, **unannounced** quiz per unit.

Short Writing Assignments (5) 500 pts

For each unit, I will assign one short essay (3 pages). Everybody will complete the first assignment and thereafter, each student will choose three of four. You **do not** have the option of completing all the assignments and dropping the lowest grade.

Short Research Assignment 300 pts

All students will complete a short (7 -10 page) research assignment on a topic that relates directly to the course's subject matter. I will hand out the research assignment separately. All research papers must have a historical focus.

Plagiarized papers will result in failure of the course. Please review the Academic Honesty section in the USU Catalogue. It's available online. For a good description of the different types of plagiarism, go to <http://www.plagiarism.org/>.

Submit papers as hard copy, not as email attachments. Print on both sides, if possible.

Schedule:

January 8,

Syllabus and Introductions

Unit I Approaches and Methods in African History

January 10th

Readings:

Themes in West Africa's History, chapters 1 and 2.

January 15th

Readings:

Themes, chapters 3 and 4.

January 17th, "Tree of Iron."

Film:

"Tree of Iron."

Unit II Early Africa Connections: Environments and Production

January 22nd, Africa's Geography

News Reports: Afrol news and other websites

Intro to Africa/Geography

Readings:

Meadows, "Biogeography." (Electronic Reserve, hereafter ER)

Reader, "The African Options, Part I." ER

January 24th, Africa's Ecological Heritage

Readings:

Reader, "The African Options, Part II and III (up to p. 179)." ER

January 29th, Africa's Agricultural Revolution

New Reports

Readings:

Vansina, "A Slow Revolution: The Growth of Farming Communities."
(ER)

Add readings from Azania.

Unit III –Social Life in Precolonial African History

January 31st, Social Status and Religion

Readings: *Themes*, chapters 6 and 7.

February 5th and 7th, Creating an African Islam

Readings, from Robinson

February 12th, Case Studies: Sokoto, Buganda, Sudan and Senegal

Readings: Robinson, Chapters 10 – 13

Writing Assignment #2 Due

February 14th, Oral Traditions and history

Ancient traditions and modern African life. Mabo and the Griot. q

Unit IV – Slavery and the Slave Trade

February 19th, No Class

February 21st

News Reports

Readings: Northrup, Part I, “Why were Africans Enslaved?” and Part II, “How Many?”

February 26th

News Reports

Readings: Northrup, Part III “Contemporary Views” and Part IV “Modern Views”

February 28, NO CLASS, Conte’s on the road.

March 4th

Readings: Northrup, and Part V “Effects in Africa” and, Part VI “Abolition.”

March 6th

Film: Slavery, History Channel

Unit V – Imperialism and Colonialism in South Africa

March 18th

March 20th

Readings:

A History of South Africa, chapters 1 and 2

March 25th

Readings:

A History, chapters 3 – 5

March 27th, NO CLASS

April 1st,

Readings:

A History, chapters, 6 and 7

April 3rd and 6th, *Barbarians at the Gate*

Readings:

Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Unit V Contemporary Africa, 1940 – Present

April 8th

Readings:

Themes, chapters 11 - 13

April 13th

Film: *Afrique: Je te Plumerai*

April 15th